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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the third National Education Goal is for all students to be competent in academic subject matter, while the fifth National Education Goal aims for U.S. students to be able to perform at world-class levels in mathematics and science. This report summarizes the progress each state has made toward Goal 3--the students' achievement and citizenship goal, and Goal 5--the mathematics and science goal, with particular emphasis placed on mathematics and science achievements in North Carolina. It is concluded that the majority of states participating in National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessments have made progress toward Goal 3 in mathematics. (ASK)

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Mathematics and Science Achievement in North Carolina, 1998

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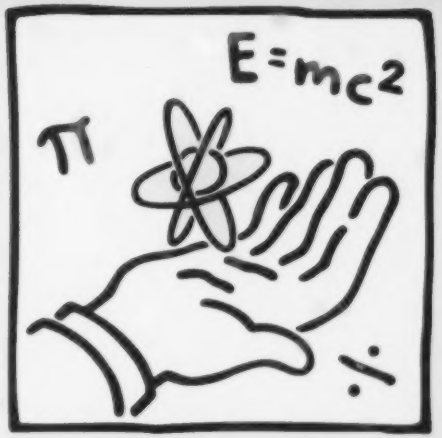
Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship

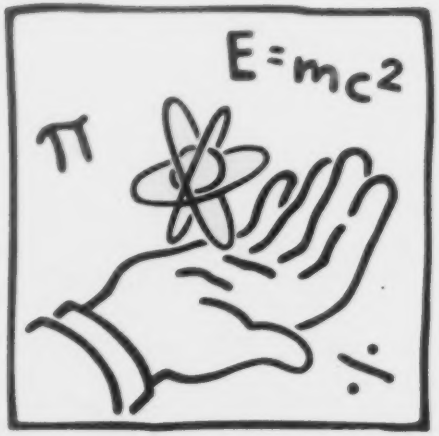


Goal 5: Mathematics and Science

The National Education Goals Panel

Mathematics and Science Achievement in North Carolina, 1998

Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



Goal 5: Mathematics and Science

The National Education Goals Panel

National Education Goals Panel

The National Education Goals Panel (NEGP) is a unique bipartisan and intergovernmental body of federal and state officials created in July 1990 to assess and report state and national progress toward achieving the National Education Goals. In 1994, the Goals Panel became a fully independent federal agency charged with monitoring and speeding progress toward the eight National Education Goals. Under the legislation, the Panel is charged with a variety of responsibilities to support systemwide reform, including:

- reporting on national and state progress toward the Goals over a 10-year period;
- working to establish a system of high academic standards and assessments;
- identifying promising practices for improving education; and
- building a nationwide, bipartisan consensus to achieve the Goals.

Panel members include eight Governors, four members of Congress, four state legislators, and two members appointed by the President.

This state report is a condensed version of *Mathematics and Science Achievement State by State, 1998*, which includes four pages of information for the United States, each state, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories. Please provide any comments you may have about this report by using the response card in the back of this document.

This report, as well as the full report, are available on-line at http://www.negp.gov

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A Special Message to the Citizens of North Carolina from Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.

Foreword

As Governor of North Carolina, I had the privilege of serving as chair of the National Education Goals Panel during the past year. The Panel has as its major responsibility the reporting of progress toward the eight National Education Goals. The report you are receiving today is an update on Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship, and Goal 5: Mathematics and Science.

The Goals Panel assigns "stars" to those states that have performed at world-class levels or that have made significant student achievement gains over time. Only six states received two stars for improvement, and North Carolina was one of those six states. In short, North Carolina was one of six states leading the nation in improved student achievement in mathematics during the 1990s. Although we are not where we need to be, it is certainly exciting to know that our K-12 education system is moving in the right direction.

This report demonstrates how North Carolina compares with other states and nations in terms of student achievement. Comparing our state to others may not tell us everything we need to know about student achievement, but it does help to analyze how our students are learning and how our teachers are teaching as compared to students and teachers in other states and countries. Thus, the report provides some very important information:

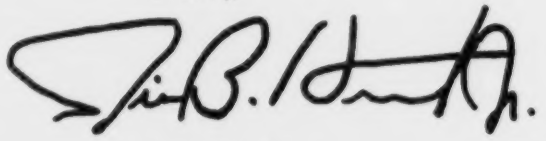
- In 4th grade mathematics, North Carolina's student achievement ranked among the top four Southern states. No Southern state outperformed North Carolina in student mathematics achievement as measured through this report.
- North Carolina's 4th graders trailed only a handful of states nationally in mathematics achievement. Only four other states in the country – Connecticut, Minnesota, Maine, and Wisconsin – had significantly higher percentages of Proficient students than did North Carolina.
- In 8th grade mathematics, North Carolina's student achievement performance ranked among the top four Southern states. Student achievement from 1990 to 1996 showed significant improvement. However, overall student performance in 8th grade mathematics falls in the middle of the pack when compared with all other states.
- In 1996, students in Grade 8 were also tested to determine their achievement level in science. North Carolina's 8th grade scores placed our students in the middle when compared to all other states, and among the top tier of Southern states.
- Internationally, North Carolina would be expected to score similarly to 15 nations in 8th grade math – including England, Germany, and the United States – significantly higher than 5 nations, and significantly lower than 21. In 8th grade science, North Carolina would be expected to do better. We would be expected to score similarly to 17 nations – including the United States, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, and the Russian Federation – significantly higher than 14 nations, and significantly lower than only 10.

In North Carolina, we are making tremendous investments in our public schools. We have many issues to confront, including making schools safer, raising standards, and attracting and retaining good teachers. Yet, in spite of these challenges, our efforts are paying off. Our students are improving their academic performance. North Carolina is now a leader in the South and is becoming very competitive with states across the country.

I am proud of North Carolina's young people. I am equally proud of their teachers and administrators, who provide the educational opportunities every day. The decade of the 1990s will be remembered as a "decade of progress" for public education, and as Governor of this great state, I am delighted that once again a major national report recognizes North Carolina's accomplishments by awarding a "two stars" marking for improved student achievement.

Please read this report carefully. It provides not only the achievement results, but also explains the tests given to students throughout the nation. It also explains how different groups of students performed. The report contains important data as we measure our progress and determine the future direction of our public schools.

Sincerely,



James B. Hunt, Jr.
Governor of North Carolina

Goal 3 and Goal 5

Goal 3 *Student Achievement and Citizenship*

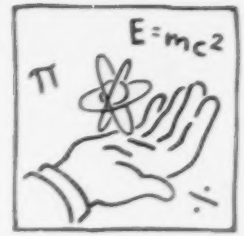
By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy.

Objectives:

- The academic performance of all students at the elementary and secondary level will increase significantly in every quartile, and the distribution of minority students in each quartile will more closely reflect the student population as a whole.
- The percentage of all students who demonstrate the ability to reason, solve problems, apply knowledge, and write and communicate effectively will increase substantially.
- All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship, good health, community service, and personal responsibility.
- All students will have access to physical education and health education to ensure they are healthy and fit.
- The percentage of all students who are competent in more than one language will substantially increase.
- All students will be knowledgeable about the diverse cultural heritage of this Nation and about the world community.

Goal 5 *Mathematics and Science*

By the year 2000, United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.



Objectives:

- Mathematics and science education, including the metric system of measurement, will be strengthened throughout the system, especially in the early grades.
- The number of teachers with a substantive background in mathematics and science, including the metric system of measurement, will increase by 50 percent.
- The number of United States undergraduate and graduate students, especially women and minorities, who complete degrees in mathematics, science, and engineering will increase significantly.

Data Highlights

The aim of the third National Education Goal is that all students will be competent in academic subject matter. State-level results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP, indicate that North Carolina has made progress toward this Goal in mathematics.

The aim of the fifth National Education Goal is that U.S. students will achieve world-class levels of performance in mathematics and science achievement. Based on their NAEP scores, 14 states would be expected to achieve this level of performance in science. North Carolina would not yet place among them, but would be expected to perform as well as many of the United States' major trading partners.

- North Carolina was one of six states awarded two gold stars by the National Education Goals Panel for improvement over time in both 4th grade and 8th grade mathematics:

  1. Colorado
  2. Connecticut
  3. Indiana
  4. North Carolina
  5. Texas
  6. West Virginia

- The National Education Goals Panel has set its performance standard at the two highest levels of achievement – Proficient or Advanced – on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP. In 1996, the percentages of public school students in North Carolina who met this standard were:

  - **21% in 4th grade mathematics;**
  - **20% in 8th grade mathematics; and**
  - **24% in 8th grade science.**

- When compared with other states, North Carolina's public school students placed in the middle of the states that participated in the 8th grade NAEP mathematics and science assessments, but closer to the top among those that participated at Grade 4. In 1996, only four states had significantly higher percentages of 4th graders who were at or above Proficient in mathematics: Connecticut, Minnesota, Maine, and Wisconsin.

- A new research study that uses NAEP scores to predict how states would compare to 41 nations that participated in the 1995 Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) places North Carolina's performance in the middle in mathematics, but closer to the top in science:

  - **Twenty-one of the 41 participating nations would be expected to outperform North Carolina's 8th graders in mathematics. North Carolina would be expected to perform as well as England, Germany, and the United States.**

  - **Only ten of the 41 participating nations would be expected to outperform North Carolina's 8th graders in science. North Carolina would be expected to perform as well as Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, the Russian Federation, and the United States, and better than France.**

Introduction

Although all of the National Education Goals are important, the two that focus on raising student academic achievement – Goals 3 and 5 – are considered by many to be the nation's highest education priorities. Goal 3 calls for all students to demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter, while Goal 5 calls for U.S. students to be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.

State policymakers need good information to help them monitor their state's progress toward these Goals. First, policymakers need to know whether student achievement is increasing over time, so that they can determine whether educational programs and policies are having the desired effect. Second, policymakers need to be able to benchmark their state against other states and countries to see how their students' academic performance compares to the best in the nation and the best in the world. Third, policymakers need to know how different groups of students are performing academically, so that they can target educational services appropriately.

This report provides all three types of information. Its purpose is to summarize the amount of progress that North Carolina has made in raising student academic achievement in mathematics and science since the National Education Goals were established in 1990.

Report format

This report contains four pages of information for North Carolina (see pp. 10-13). The first three pages measure progress toward Goal 3, using student achievement data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). NAEP was authorized by Congress in 1969, and is the only nationally representative and ongoing assessment that measures what students know and are able to do in different subject areas. Congress expanded NAEP to allow the reporting of comparable state-by-state results, beginning with the 1990 mathematics assessment. Participation in state-level NAEP is voluntary, and has increased from 40 states and territories in 1990 to 45 in 1996.

NAEP results are reported in mathematics (Grades 4 and 8) and science (Grade 8). Thus far, these are the only grades in which NAEP mathematics and science assessments have been administered at the state level. Since 1990, mathematics has been assessed twice at Grade 4 (in 1992 and 1996) and three times at Grade 8 (in 1990, 1992, and 1996). Science has been assessed once (in 1996).

The first three pages of data show:

- how much progress North Carolina has made over time;
- how the state's latest academic performance compares to that of the United States and other states;[1] and
- how different subgroups of students in the state performed on the most recent NAEP assessment.

The National Education Goals Panel awards gold stars to states that have shown a significant increase in the percentage of students in their state who meet the National Education Goals Panel's performance standard.[2] The Goals Panel's performance standard is based on three achievement levels set by the National Assessment Governing Board to describe the quality of student achievement on NAEP: Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. The Basic level represents partial mastery of necessary knowledge and skills; the Proficient level represents solid academic performance; and the Advanced level represents superior performance.[3] The Goals Panel has set its performance standard at the Proficient or Advanced levels on NAEP. The Goals Panel considers performance at these two highest levels as evidence that students have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter.

The fourth page of data shows how close North Carolina is to achieving Goal 5 (see p. 13). Although Goal 5 calls for the United States – not each individual state – to be first in the world in mathematics and science, the majority of states must be at world-class levels of performance in mathematics and science if we expect the nation to attain first-in-the-world status. International comparisons of student achievement in 8th grade mathematics and science are presented, using data from a newly released research study.[4] This study statistically links state results from the 1996 NAEP with country results

[1] The term "state" is used hereafter in this report to refer to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories.

[2] In this report, "significance" refers to statistical significance and indicates that the observed differences are not likely to have occurred by chance. All differences in this report that are termed "statistically significant" are measured at the 0.05 level.

[3] Bourque, M.L., Champagne, A.B., & Crissman, S. (1997, October). *1996 Science performance standards: Achievement results for the nation and the states*. Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board.

[4] Johnson, E.G., & Siegendorf, A. (1998, May). *Linking the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study: Eighth grade results*. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 98-500. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

from the 1995 Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). TIMSS is the most comprehensive international study of mathematics and science achievement conducted to date. TIMSS tested half a million students in 41 countries in 30 different languages. Participating countries included the United States, as well as some of the United States' chief economic competitors and trading partners, such as Japan, Germany, Canada, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the Russian Federation.

Linking the two assessments allows us to predict how each state would have performed on TIMSS, relative to the 41 countries that actually participated in the international assessment, on the basis of each state's NAEP performance. The authors of the linking study caution that the technique used to link the two tests can provide only limited information, since NAEP and TIMSS cover different content and were taken by different groups of students at different times. Nevertheless, the technique can provide broad comparisons that tell states which countries' students would be expected to score significantly higher than, similar to, or significantly lower than their own students in mathematics and science on this international assessment. In this report, gold stars signifying "world-class performance" are awarded to those states that would be expected to score as well as, or better than, 40 or more of the 41 participating TIMSS nations in mathematics or science.

Value to states

This report shows three of the ways in which NAEP data can be a valuable source of information for states:

1. **NAEP can be used to monitor educational progress over time.**

One of the most common uses of NAEP is to monitor trends in academic performance to see whether student achievement is improving over time. This is possible because NAEP is designed to repeat assessments in each subject area at least every four years. This feature enables policymakers to answer questions such as: Has student performance improved since my state established new statewide standards in science? Are more 8th graders in my state considered Proficient in mathematics since my state began requiring all 8th graders to take algebra?

> *Improvement Over Time is presented in Part 1 on pp. 10-12. The percentages of North Carolina students who scored at or above the Proficient level on NAEP mathematics and science assessments will be tracked over a ten-year period, from the establishment of the National Education Goals in 1990, until the year 2000.*

2. **NAEP can be used to benchmark state performance against the best in the nation and the best in the world.**

Because NAEP scores are comparable across states, policymakers can use NAEP to answer questions such as: How does my state compare to neighboring states or to the highest-performing states in the country?[5] It is also possible to use NAEP scores in a more limited way to predict relative performance on a related assessment such as TIMSS, so that states can benchmark their performance against top-performing nations in mathematics and science. Policymakers can use results from the NAEP/TIMSS linking study to answer questions such as: How many nations would be expected to outperform my state in 8th grade mathematics? How would my state be expected to perform in comparison to the United States' major trading partners in 8th grade science?

> *State Comparisons are presented in Part 2 on pp. 10-12. North Carolina's performance is compared to the nation and to other states on the most recent NAEP mathematics and science assessments.*
>
> *International Comparisons are presented on p. 13. North Carolina's predicted performance on TIMSS is compared to the actual performance of the 41 participating TIMSS nations. Countries are clustered in alphabetical order in three groups: those that would be expected to perform significantly higher than, significantly lower than, or not significantly different from North Carolina in 8th grade mathematics and science.*

3. **NAEP can be used to monitor whether all groups of students in a state are achieving at high levels.**

Goal 3 specifies that all students will demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter. Because NAEP data can be broken out by subgroups, policymakers can use NAEP to answer questions such as: Are similar

[5] Although NAEP scores are comparable, the reader should bear in mind that many variables of interest to state policymakers can contribute to differences in state performance, such as available resources, curricula, educational practices, etc. The results presented in this report do not control for these variables.

proportions of boys and girls in my state considered Proficient in mathematics and science? Do minority students score as well as White students? Do large achievement gaps exist between urban and non-urban students?

> ***Subgroup Performance*** *is presented in Part 3 on pp. 10-12. This section shows how many students in different subgroups in North Carolina scored at or above the Proficient level on the most recent NAEP mathematics and science assessments. Results are presented by sex, race/ethnicity, parents' highest level of education, school location, and eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch programs.*

Interpreting the results

NAEP is a large-scale assessment intended for monitoring trends in student performance and is not administered to every student. Instead, samples of students are selected to take the test. This enables states to use smaller, cost-efficient samples to predict how the entire student population would have performed on an assessment without testing all of them. This is similar to a public opinion poll that predicts, with a certain degree of confidence, how all individuals would have responded to a set of questions had they all been polled.

It is important to note that any estimate based on a sample, whether it is from a NAEP assessment or a public opinion poll, contains a small amount of error. The estimate would be slightly higher or slightly lower if a different sample were chosen. Public opinion polls account for this error when they caution that their results are "accurate within plus or minus two percentage points." In the same way, we must account for the uncertainty in NAEP results, whether we are comparing progress over time, performance among states, or performance among subgroups of students within a state.

We account for the uncertainty by using a formula to calculate a standard error for each estimate.[6] The standard error tells us how precise the estimate is. The closer the standard error is to zero, the more precise the estimate. Although sample size is only one of several factors that influence the size of the standard error, as a general rule, larger samples yield more precise estimates and smaller standard errors.

If we want to examine differences between groups – for example, to determine whether one state performed at a higher level than another did – we must apply a statistical test to tell us whether there are likely to be differences in actual performance between groups in the entire population. The statistical test takes into account the size of the standard errors for each group's score, as well as the difference between the scores. If the test indicates that the groups in the entire population are likely to perform differently, we say that the difference is statistically significant. This means that the differences are not likely to have occurred by chance – we can be confident that performance has changed over time or one group has outperformed another.

This should be kept in mind when reviewing the data on pp. 10-12. In Part 2, for example, it may appear that one state outperformed another because the percentage of students who met the Goals Panel's performance standard in the first state is higher. However, the percentages may not be statistically different because each percentage is an estimate which has some uncertainty associated with it. For this reason, it would not be accurate to rank individual states strictly by the percentages of students who scored at or above Proficient. Instead of ranking individual states, it is more useful to talk about states' performance in terms of clusters of states that performed significantly higher than, significantly lower than, or not significantly different from a particular state.

Similarly, in Part 3, it would not be accurate to conclude that one subgroup of students outperformed another based solely on the percentages listed on the graph. An observed difference of 3 percentage points between males and females, for example, may not be statistically significant when standard errors are taken into account. In order to keep the graphs in Part 3 as clear and as readable as possible, we have not attempted to flag subgroup differences on the graphs themselves. Instead, statistically significant differences between subgroups are summarized on page 14.

Finally, readers should use caution when interpreting the results of the NAEP/TIMSS linking study on p. 13. The purpose of the linking study is to compare states to nations, not states to states or nations to nations. State-to-state comparisons, using comparable NAEP data, appear in Part 2 on pp. 10-12. Because the results of the NAEP/TIMSS linking study can offer only approximate comparisons of performance of individual states relative to the 41 participating TIMSS nations, nations are simply listed in alphabetical order and actual scores are not shown.[7]

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[6] For more detailed information, see the National Education Goals Panel's full report, *Mathematics and Science Achievement State by State, 1998*. See also the Technical Report of the NAEP 1996 State Assessment Program in Mathematics.

[7] For more detailed technical information about the NAEP/TIMSS linking study, see the forthcoming report from the National Center for Education Statistics, *Linking the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study at the eighth grade: A research report.*

Findings — Improvement Over Time

The percentage of students who met the Goals Panel's performance standard (that is, a score at or above Proficient on NAEP) increased significantly during the 1990s:

- nationally and in 7 states in 4th grade mathematics; and
- nationally and in 27 states in 8th grade mathematics.

In no state has achievement declined by an amount that is statistically significant.

The 28 states that earned stars for improvement over time are shown on the map in Figure 1. At present, the maximum number of stars that a state can earn for improvement in student academic achievement is two (in 4th grade mathematics and in 8th grade mathematics). A star for improvement cannot yet be earned in 8th grade science, because NAEP has assessed science only once at the state level.

★ *Twenty-eight states, including North Carolina, have earned at least one star (out of a possible two) for improvement over time in mathematics in either Grade 4 or Grade 8:*

1. Arizona
2. Arkansas
3. California
4. Colorado
5. Connecticut
6. Delaware
7. Florida
8. Hawaii
9. Indiana
10. Iowa
11. Kentucky
12. Maryland
13. Michigan
14. Minnesota
15. Montana
16. Nebraska
17. New Hampshire
18. New Mexico
19. New York
20. North Carolina
21. North Dakota
22. Oregon
23. Rhode Island
24. Tennessee
25. Texas
26. West Virginia
27. Wisconsin
28. Wyoming

★★ *Six of these states, including North Carolina, have earned two stars (out of a possible two) for improvement over time in mathematics in both Grade 4 and Grade 8:*

1. Colorado
2. Connecticut
3. Indiana
4. North Carolina
5. Texas
6. West Virginia

- ***Seven states that made significant gains in mathematics were also among the highest-performing states* in the nation:***

1. Connecticut
2. Iowa
3. Minnesota
4. Montana
5. Nebraska
6. North Dakota
7. Wisconsin

Findings — State Comparisons

Mathematics — Grade 4

National Performance

In 1996, 21% of U.S. 4th graders in public and nonpublic schools scored at the Proficient level or higher on the NAEP mathematics assessment.

State Performance

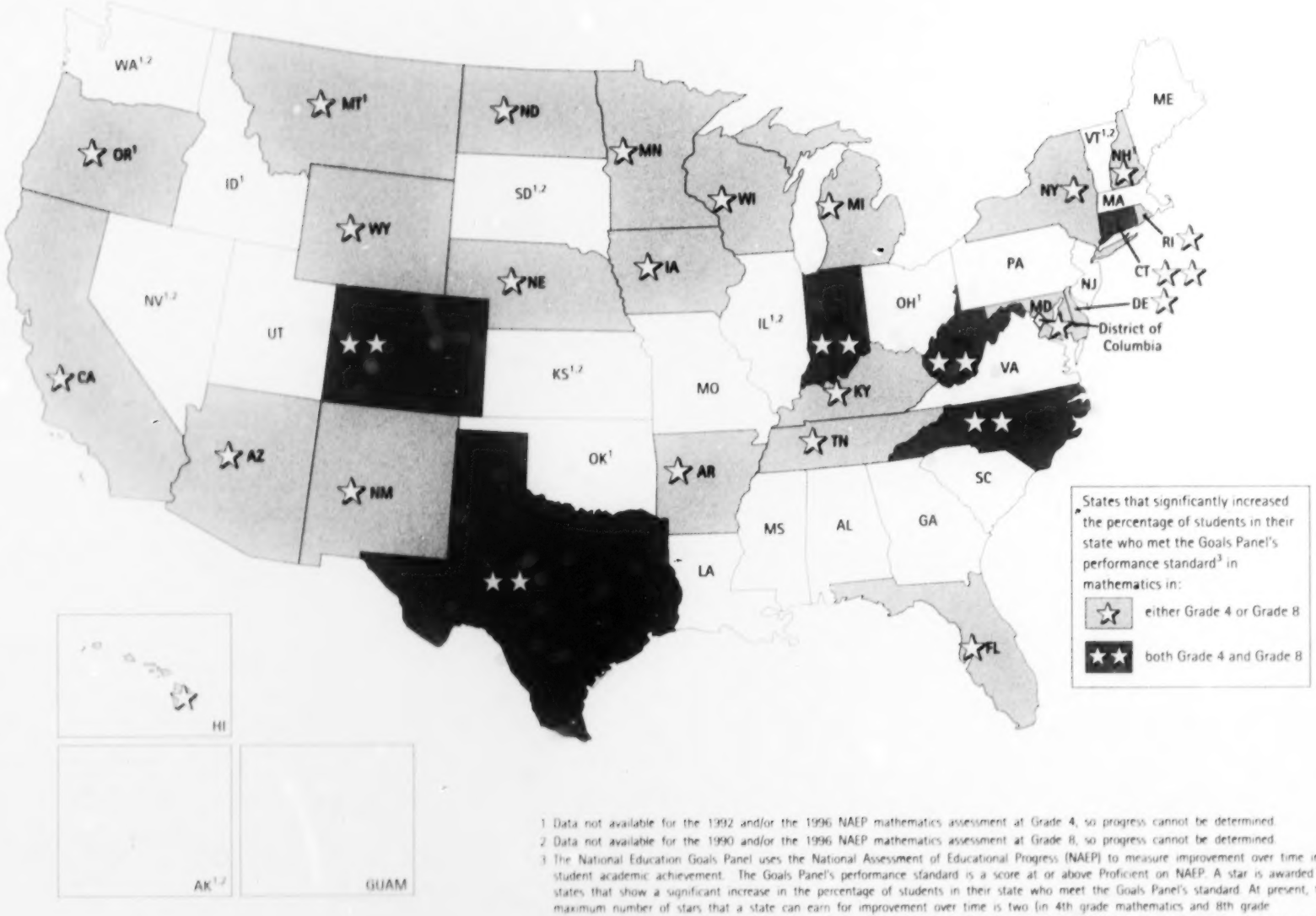
In 1996, the percentage of public school 4th graders who scored at the Proficient level or higher on the NAEP mathematics assessment ranged from 3% in the lowest-performing states to 31% in the highest-performing states. In North Carolina, 21% met the standard.

Highest-performing states*	
Connecticut	31%
Minnesota	29%
Maine	27%
Wisconsin	27%

* Highest-performing states are defined as those in which the percentage of students who scored at or above Proficient on NAEP was significantly higher than the percentage of students who did so nationally.

State Progress Toward Goal 3: Improvement Over Time in Mathematics and Science Achievement

Figure 1



1 Data not available for the 1992 and/or the 1996 NAEP mathematics assessment at Grade 4, so progress cannot be determined.

2 Data not available for the 1990 and/or the 1996 NAEP mathematics assessment at Grade 8, so progress cannot be determined.

3 The National Education Goals Panel uses the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to measure improvement over time in student academic achievement. The Goals Panel's performance standard is a score at or above Proficient on NAEP. A star is awarded to states that show a significant increase in the percentage of students in their state who meet the Goals Panel's standard. At present, the maximum number of stars that a state can earn for improvement over time is two (in 4th grade mathematics and 8th grade mathematics). A star for improvement cannot yet be earned in 8th grade science, because NAEP has assessed science only once at the state level.

Mathematics — Grade 8

National Performance

In 1996, 24% of U.S. 8th graders in public and nonpublic schools scored at the Proficient level or higher on the NAEP mathematics assessment.

State Performance

In 1996, the percentage of public school 8th graders who scored at the Proficient level or higher on the NAEP mathematics assessment ranged from 5% in the lowest-performing states to 34% in the highest-performing states. In North Carolina, 20% met the standard.

Highest-performing[*] states	
Minnesota	34%
North Dakota	33%
Montana	32%
Wisconsin	32%
Connecticut	31%
Iowa	31%
Maine	31%
Nebraska	31%
Alaska	30%

Science — Grade 8

National Performance

In 1996, 29% of U.S. 8th graders in public and nonpublic schools scored at the Proficient level or higher on the NAEP science assessment.

State Performance

In 1996, the percentage of public school 8th graders who scored at the Proficient level or higher on the NAEP science assessment ranged from 5% in the lowest-performing states to 41% in the highest-performing states. In North Carolina, 24% met the standard.

Highest-performing[*] states	
Maine	41%
Montana	41%
North Dakota	41%
Wisconsin	39%
Massachusetts	37%
Minnesota	37%
Connecticut	36%
Iowa	36%
Nebraska	35%
Wyoming	34%

Findings — Subgroup Performance[§]

Differences by Sex

- Nationally and in 9 out of 45 states, the percentage of male students who scored at or above Proficient in 4th grade mathematics was higher than the percentage of females who did so. There was no significant difference in North Carolina.
- In 6 out of 43 states, including North Carolina, males outperformed females in 8th grade mathematics. There was no significant difference at the national level.
- In 19 out of 42 states, males outperformed females in 8th grade science. There was no significant difference at the national level or in North Carolina.

Differences by Race/Ethnicity

- At the national level and in most states, there were no significant differences between the percentages of White and Asian/Pacific Islander students who scored at the Proficient level or higher on NAEP.
- However, in the majority of cases at both the national and state levels, the percentages of White students who scored at the Proficient level or higher were significantly greater than the percentages of other minority students who met this standard. In North Carolina, the percentages of White students who scored at the Proficient level or higher in mathematics were significantly greater than the percentages of Black and Hispanic students who did so. In 8th grade science, the percentages were significantly greater for White students than for Blacks, Hispanics, or American Indians/Alaskan Natives.

Differences by Parents' Highest Level of Education

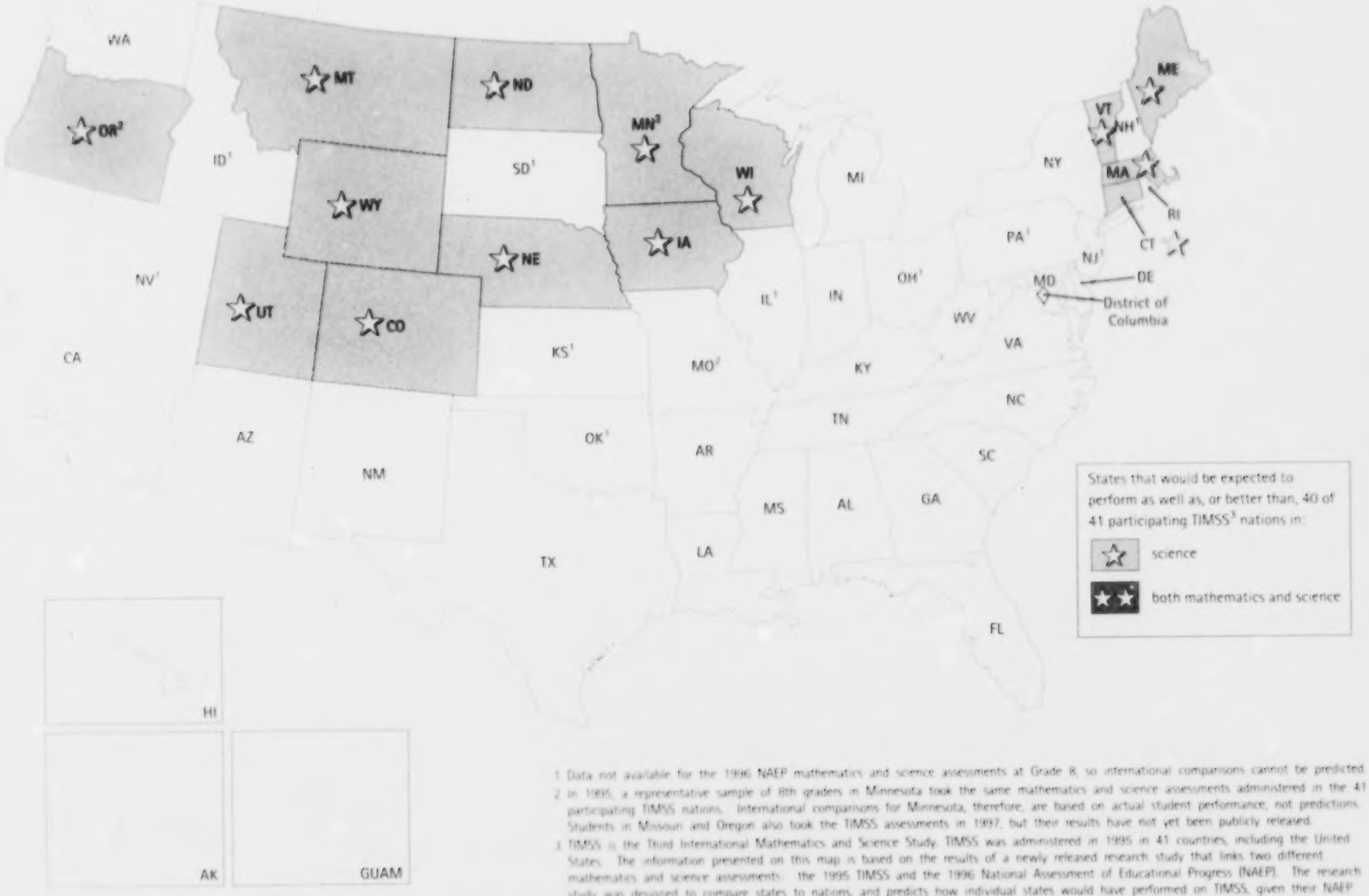
- Nationally, in North Carolina, and in almost every other case at the state level, students whose parents had some education beyond high school or whose parents were college graduates outperformed students who reported that neither of their parents had graduated from high school.

[*] Highest-performing states are defined as those in which the percentage of students who scored at or above Proficient on NAEP was significantly higher than the percentage of students who did so nationally.

[§] The reader is cautioned to avoid interpreting subgroup differences in this section of the report as causal relationships.

State Progress Toward Goal 5: World-Class Performance in Mathematics and Science Achievement

Figure 2



1 Data not available for the 1996 NAEP mathematics and science assessments at Grade 8, so international comparisons cannot be predicted.

2 In 1995, a representative sample of 8th graders in Minnesota took the same mathematics and science assessments administered in the 41 participating TIMSS nations. International comparisons for Minnesota, therefore, are based on actual student performance, not predictions. Students in Missouri and Oregon also took the TIMSS assessments in 1997, but their results have not yet been publicly released.

3 TIMSS is the Third International Mathematics and Science Study. TIMSS was administered in 1995 in 41 countries, including the United States. The information presented on this map is based on the results of a newly released research study that links two different mathematics and science assessments: the 1995 TIMSS and the 1996 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The research study was designed to compare states to nations, and predicts how individual states would have performed on TIMSS, given their NAEP scores. At present, the maximum number of stars that a state can earn for world-class academic performance is two (in Grade 8 mathematics and Grade 8 science), although no state has earned a star in mathematics.

Differences by School Location

- At the national level, students who attended school in urban fringes/large towns outperformed those who attended school in central cities in 4th grade mathematics and 8th grade mathematics. North Carolina was one of the few states in which students who attended school in central cities outperformed other students.

Differences by Poverty
(as measured by eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch program)

- In all cases – nationally and in every state – students who were not eligible for the free/reduced-price lunch program outperformed students who were eligible for this program. This was true across all subjects and grades.

Findings – International Comparisons

In 8th grade mathematics, the United States scored higher than 7 countries, lower than 20, and not significantly different from 13. In 8th grade science, the United States scored higher than 15 countries, lower than 9, and not significantly different from 16. When compared to our chief economic partners, the United States is in the bottom half in mathematics and around the middle in science.

The expected performance of individual states on the TIMSS mathematics and science assessments varied widely. In mathematics, the number of countries that would be expected to outperform a given state ranged from 6 to 38. In science, the number ranged from 1 to 38.

States that earned gold stars for "world-class performance" in mathematics and science are shown on the map in Figure 2. Stars were awarded to states that would be expected to score as well as, or better than, 40 or more of the 41 participating TIMSS nations in mathematics or science. The maximum number of stars that a state can earn for world-class performance is two (one in mathematics and one in science), although no state earned a star in mathematics. North Carolina would be expected to score as well as, or better than, 20 nations in mathematics and 31 nations in science.

In science, 14 states earned a star for world-class performance. Students in only one nation – Singapore – would be expected to outperform the 8th graders in these states in science:

1. Colorado
2. Connecticut
3. Iowa
4. Maine
5. Massachusetts
6. Minnesota
7. Montana
8. Nebraska
9. North Dakota
10. Oregon
11. Utah
12. Vermont
13. Wisconsin
14. Wyoming

Conclusions

Is North Carolina making progress toward Goal 3 of the National Education Goals by increasing student achievement in mathematics and science? We cannot answer this question for science yet because NAEP has assessed science only once at the state level. However, in mathematics the answer is "yes." The majority of states that participated in NAEP assessments during the 1990s, including North Carolina, have shown significant improvements in student academic achievement in mathematics in at least one grade. North Carolina was one of twenty-eight states that earned at least one star (out of a possible two) for improvement over time, and one of six states that earned two. From this perspective, North Carolina has moved closer to the Goal in mathematics.

How close is North Carolina to achieving the world-class levels of performance in mathematics and science indicated in Goal 5? Results of the NAEP/TIMSS linking study suggest that no state would likely place first in the world in mathematics. States with the highest NAEP scores in the nation would be expected to trail at least six countries if they were to take the TIMSS assessment, and North Carolina would be expected to fall in the middle of the group of countries. North Carolina would be expected to fare better in science, but would not place among the 14 states that would be expected to achieve world-class levels of performance in 8th grade science.

The challenge before us now is to increase momentum – to accelerate student academic progress in more states, in more subject areas, in more grades, and among all students. The National Education Goals Panel will continue to monitor state progress as new state-level NAEP assessments are administered in reading, writing, mathematics, and science between now and the end of the decade, and in 1999, when the international TIMSS mathematics and science assessments are scheduled to be repeated in approximately 40 countries. Future Goals Panel reports will describe educational programs and policies implemented by states that have made significant progress in raising student academic achievement. This information will be available on the Goals Panel's Web site, www.negp.gov, as part of a series of reports on promising state practices.

The National Education Goals Panel remains convinced that states want and need good information that will help them gauge the success of their education improvement efforts. This document shows three ways in which NAEP and TIMSS data can help state policymakers measure their state's progress toward Goals 3 and 5:

- by monitoring educational progress over time;
- by benchmarking their students' academic performance against the best in the nation and the best in the world; and
- by monitoring the extent to which all groups of students in their state are achieving at high levels.

The Goals Panel strongly encourages North Carolina and all other states to continue participating in NAEP assessments and to consider participating in the next administration of TIMSS, so that policymakers and the public can determine whether educational programs and policies are producing the desired results – students who are competent, knowledgeable, and capable.

Data Sources

Mathematics

Reese, C.M., Miller, K.E., Mazzeo, J., & Dossey, J.A. (1997, February). *NAEP 1996 mathematics report card for the nation and the states.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

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International Comparisons

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (1997). *Pursuing excellence: A study of U.S. eighth-grade mathematics and science teaching, learning, curriculum, and achievement in international context,* NCES 97-198, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Johnson, E.G., & Siegendorf, A. (1998, May). *Linking the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study: Eighth grade results.* Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 98-500, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

North Carolina

Mathematics Grade 4

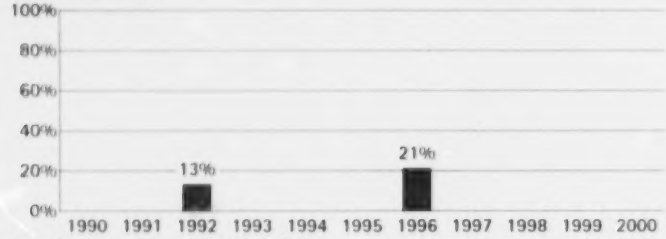
1. Improvement Over Time

Have North Carolina's 4th graders improved in mathematics achievement?

Yes. The percentage of North Carolina's public school 4th graders who met the Goals Panel's performance standard in mathematics increased from 13% in 1992, to 21% in 1996.

The Goals Panel has set its performance standard at the two highest levels of achievement – Proficient or Advanced – on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP.

Percentage of public school 4th graders at or above Proficient on the NAEP mathematics assessment



Mathematics performance will be tested again in 2000.

2. State Comparisons[†]

How did North Carolina compare with other states in 4th grade mathematics achievement in public schools in 1996?

4 states had significantly higher[‡] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:

Connecticut	31%	Maine, Wisconsin	27%
Minnesota	29%		

23 states had similar[‡] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:

New Jersey, Texas	25%	*U.S.,* North Carolina*, Alaska, Oregon, Washington	21%
Indiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, North Dakota	24%	Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania	20%
Michigan, Utah, Vermont	23%	Virginia, West Virginia, Wyoming	19%
Colorado, Iowa, Maryland, Montana	22%	Tennessee[2]	17%

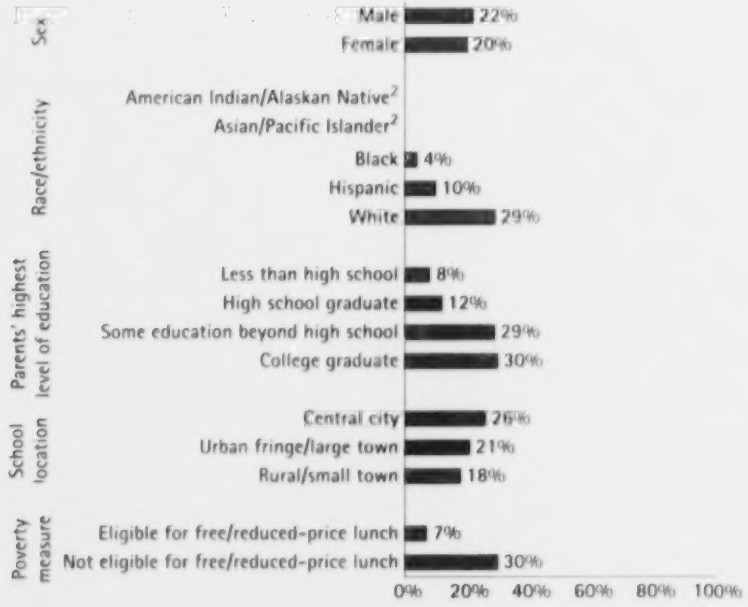
17 states had significantly lower[‡] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:

Rhode Island[2]	17%	South Carolina	12%
Delaware, Hawaii, Kentucky	16%	Alabama, California	11%
Arizona, Florida	15%	Louisiana, Mississippi	8%
Nevada	14%	District of Columbia	5%
Arkansas, Georgia, New Mexico	13%	Guam	3%

[†] The term "state" is used to refer to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories.
[‡] See explanation on p. 3.
[2] State may appear to be out of place; however, statistically, its placement is correct.
* Figure shown for the U.S. includes both public and nonpublic school data.

3. Subgroup Performance

What percentages of public school 4th graders in different subgroups[1] in North Carolina were at or above Proficient on the 1996 NAEP mathematics assessment?



[1] Interpret differences between subgroups with caution. See p. 14.
[2] Characteristics of the sample do not permit a reliable estimate.

Mathematics Grade 8 — North Carolina

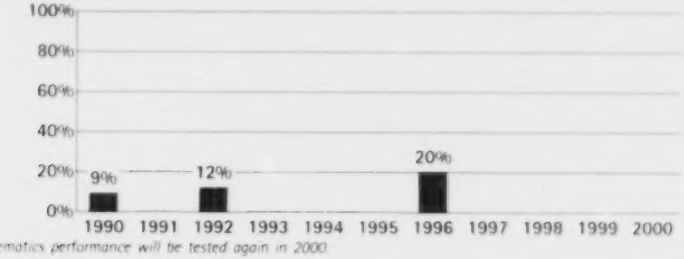
1. Improvement Over Time

Have North Carolina's 8th graders improved in mathematics achievement?

Yes. The percentage of North Carolina's public school 8th graders who met the Goals Panel's performance standard in mathematics increased from 9% in 1990, to 20% in 1996.

The Goals Panel has set its performance standard at the two highest levels of achievement – Proficient or Advanced – on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP.

Percentage of public school 8th graders at or above Proficient on the NAEP mathematics assessment



Mathematics performance will be tested again in 2000.

2. State Comparisons[1]

How did North Carolina compare with other states in 8th grade mathematics achievement in public schools in 1996?

15 states had significantly higher[1] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:

Minnesota	34%	Massachusetts, Michigan	28%
North Dakota	33%	Vermont	27%
Montana, Wisconsin	32%	Oregon, Washington	26%
Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Nebraska	31%	Colorado	25%
Alaska	30%		

14 states had similar[1] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:

U.S.*	24%	Delaware	19%
Indiana, Maryland, Utah	24%	Arizona	18%
Missouri, New York, Wyoming	22%	California, Florida	17%
Texas, Virginia	21%	Georgia[2]	16%
North Carolina, Rhode Island	20%		

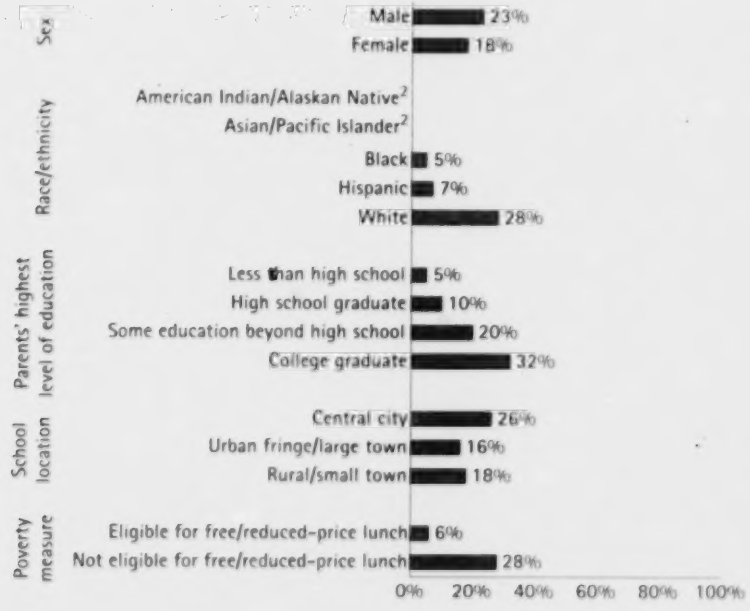
12 states had significantly lower[1] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:

Hawaii,[2] Kentucky[2]	16%	Alabama	12%
Tennessee	15%	Louisiana, Mississippi	7%
New Mexico, South Carolina, West Virginia	14%	Guam	6%
Arkansas	13%	District of Columbia	5%

[1] The term "state" is used to refer to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories.
[1] See explanation on p. 3.
[2] State may appear to be out of place; however, statistically, its placement is correct.
* Figure shown for the U.S. includes both public and nonpublic school data.

3. Subgroup Performance

What percentages of public school 8th graders in different subgroups[1] in North Carolina were at or above Proficient on the 1996 NAEP mathematics assessment?



[1] Interpret differences between subgroups with caution. See p. 14.
[2] Characteristics of the sample do not permit a reliable estimate.

North Carolina

Science Grade 8

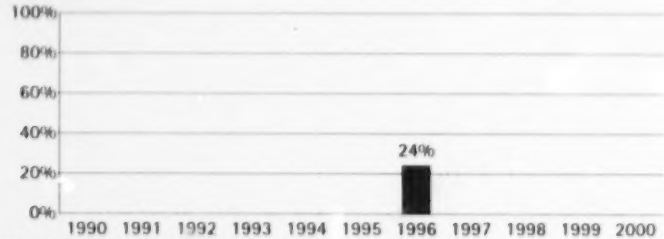
1. Improvement Over Time

Have North Carolina's 8th graders improved in science achievement?

In 1996, 24% of North Carolina's public school 8th graders met the Goals Panel's performance standard in science. The Goals Panel will report whether science performance has improved over time when science is assessed again in 2000.

The Goals Panel has set its performance standard at the two highest levels of achievement – Proficient or Advanced – on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP.

Percentage of public school 8th graders at or above Proficient on the NAEP science assessment



Science performance will be tested again in 2000.

2. State Comparisons[1]

How did North Carolina compare with other states in 8th grade science achievement in public schools in 1996?

17 states had significantly higher[1] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:			
Maine, Montana, North Dakota	41%	Vermont, Wyoming	34%
Wisconsin	39%	Colorado, Michigan, Oregon, Utah	32%
Massachusetts, Minnesota	37%	Alaska	31%
Connecticut, Iowa	36%	Indiana	30%
Nebraska	35%	***U.S.****	**29%**

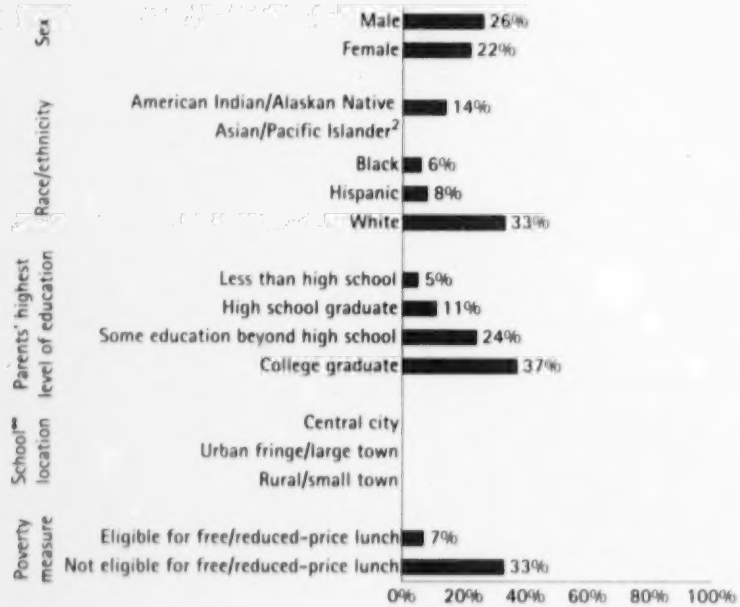
16 states had similar[1] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:			
Missouri	28%	Arizona, Kentucky, Texas	23%
New York, Virginia, Washington	27%	Arkansas, Tennessee	22%
Rhode Island	26%	Delaware, Florida, Georgia, West Virginia	21%
Maryland	25%		
North Carolina	**24%**	California	20%

8 states had significantly lower[1] percentages of students who were at or above Proficient on NAEP:			
New Mexico	19%	Louisiana	13%
Alabama	18%	Mississippi	12%
South Carolina	17%	Guam	7%
Hawaii	15%	District of Columbia	5%

† The term "state" is used to refer to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories.
[1] See explanation on p. 3.
* Figure shown for the U.S. includes both public and nonpublic school data.

3. Subgroup Performance

What percentages of public school 8th graders in different subgroups[1] in North Carolina were at or above Proficient on the 1996 NAEP science assessment?



[1] Interpret differences between subgroups with caution. See p. 14.
[2] Characteristics of the sample do not permit a reliable estimate.
** No school location data for science in 1996.

International Comparisons

North Carolina

Mathematics Grade 8

Forty-one nations' participated in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 8th grade mathematics in 1995. If public school 8th graders in North Carolina participated in the TIMSS mathematics assessment, how would their average performance compare to that of students who took TIMSS in these nations?

21 nations' would be expected to perform significantly higher:[1]

(Australia)
(Austria)
Belgium – Flemish[2]
(Belgium – French)[2]
(Bulgaria)
Canada
Czech Republic
France
Hong Kong
Hungary
Ireland
Japan
Korea
(Netherlands)
Russian Federation
Singapore
Slovak Republic
(Slovenia)
Sweden
(Switzerland)
(Thailand)

15 nations' would be expected to perform similarly:[1]

Cyprus
(Denmark)
(England)
(Germany)
(Greece)
Iceland
(Israel)
(Latvia – LSS)[3]
(Lithuania)
New Zealand
North Carolina
Norway
(Romania)
(Scotland)
Spain
United States

5 nations' would be expected to perform significantly lower:[1]

(Colombia)
Iran, Islamic Republic
(Kuwait)
Portugal
(South Africa)

† The term "nation" is used to refer to nations, states, or jurisdictions. Performance for nations is based on public school data only. Nations not meeting international guidelines are shown in parentheses.

1 See explanation on p. 3.

2 The Flemish and French educational systems in Belgium participated separately.

3 Latvia is designated LSS because only Latvian-speaking schools were tested, which represent less than 65% of the population.

Science Grade 8

Forty-one nations' participated in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 8th grade science in 1995. If public school 8th graders in North Carolina participated in the TIMSS science assessment, how would their average performance compare to that of students who took TIMSS in these nations?

10 nations' would be expected to perform significantly higher:[1]

(Austria)
(Bulgaria)
Czech Republic
(England)
Hungary
Japan
Korea
(Netherlands)
Singapore
(Slovenia)

17 nations' would be expected to perform similarly:[1]

(Australia)
Belgium – Flemish[2]
Canada
(Germany)
Hong Kong
Ireland
(Israel)
New Zealand
North Carolina
Norway
Russian Federation
(Scotland)
Slovak Republic
Spain
Sweden
(Switzerland)
(Thailand)
United States

14 nations' would be expected to perform significantly lower:[1]

(Belgium – French)[2]
(Colombia)
Cyprus
(Denmark)
France
(Greece)
Iceland
Iran, Islamic Republic
(Kuwait)
(Latvia – LSS)[3]
(Lithuania)
Portugal
(Romania)
(South Africa)

† The term "nation" is used to refer to nations, states, or jurisdictions. Performance for nations is based on public school data only. Nations not meeting international guidelines are shown in parentheses.

1 See explanation on p. 3.

2 The Flemish and French educational systems in Belgium participated separately.

3 Latvia is designated LSS because only Latvian-speaking schools were tested, which represent less than 65% of the population.

North Carolina

Statistically Significant Differences in Subgroup Performance on NAEP

This page of the report provides additional information about the student subgroups in North Carolina profiled in Part 3 on the state pages. Part 3 shows the percentages of public school students in different subgroups who met the Goals Panel's performance standard (that is, a score at or above the Proficient level) on the most recent NAEP mathematics and science assessments. Results are presented by sex, race/ethnicity, parents' highest level of education, school location, and eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch programs.

Pairs of subgroups are listed only if the percentage of students in one group who scored at or above Proficient was significantly higher than that of students in a second group. (See explanation of statistical significance on p. 3.) This is shortened to read, for example, males outperformed females. If a particular pair of subgroups is not shown, either the differences between them were not statistically significant, or sample sizes were too small to permit reliable estimates. The reader is cautioned to avoid interpreting these subgroup differences as causal relationships.

Mathematics, Grade 4 – 1996

- Whites outperformed Blacks and Hispanics.
- Students whose parents (a) had some education beyond high school, or (b) completed college outperformed students whose parents did not complete high school.
- Students in central cities outperformed students in rural areas/small towns.
- Students who *were not* eligible for the free/reduced-price school lunch program outperformed students who *were* eligible.

Mathematics, Grade 8 – 1996

- Males outperformed females.
- Whites outperformed Blacks and Hispanics.
- Students whose parents (a) completed high school, (b) had some education beyond high school, or (c) completed college outperformed students whose parents did not complete high school.
- Students in central cities outperformed students in rural areas/small towns and students in urban fringes/large towns.
- Students who *were not* eligible for the free/reduced-price school lunch program outperformed students who *were* eligible.

Science, Grade 8 – 1996

- Whites outperformed American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Blacks, and Hispanics.
- Students whose parents (a) completed high school, (b) had some education beyond high school, or (c) completed college outperformed students whose parents did not complete high school.
- Students who *were not* eligible for the free/reduced-price school lunch program outperformed students who *were* eligible.

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___ Very Well ___ Well ___ Poorly ___ Very Poorly

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(1 = not very useful and 5 = very useful)

- Part 1 - Improvement Over Time

1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- Part 2 - State Comparisons

1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- Part 3 - Subgroup Performance

1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- International Comparisons

1 2 3 4 5 N/A

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